



Walt Disney's Carousel of Progress

Intro, Scenes 1 & 2

-Courtesy of Jason Snyder-

NARRATOR: Welcome, to Walt Disney's Carousel of Progress. You're in for a real treat. The Carousel of Progress was Walt's own idea from beginning to end. He loved it. He introduced the show at the World's Fair in New York City in 1964 and it was an immediate smash hit. Millions of people came to see it and since then, the Carousel of Progress has had more performances than any other stage show in the history of American theater. You know, Walt loved the idea of progress and he loved the American family. He himself was probably as American as anyone could possibly be. He thought it would be fun to watch the American family go through the twentieth century experiencing all new wonders as they came. And he put them together in a show called Carousel of Progress, which we are about to see. Although our Carousel family has experienced a few changes over the years, our show still revolves around the same theme: and that's progress. May the century begin.

Our theater starts to move for the first time. Lively banjo music comes on to the tune of the ride's theme song.

CHORUS:

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
Shining at the end of every day.
There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
And tomorrow is just a dream away.
Man has a dream and that's the start.
He follows his dream in mind and heart.

Our theater rolls around to the first stage. It's the kitchen of a circa 1900 home. Father (our narrator) is sitting in a rocker, wearing a smoking jacket and holding a pipe and newspaper. Father joins in on the singing as the chorus fades out.

FATHER:

And when it becomes a reality,
It's a dream come true for you and me.
So there's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
Shining at the end of every day,
There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
Just a dream away.

The song ends, but quiet violin music plays in the background. Through the windows we see that it's a bright sunny day outside. Birds are chirping in the spring air. Father notices the sound of the birds and begins to address the crowd.

FATHER: Well, looks like the robins are getting ready to celebrate



Valentines day today. What year is it? Oh, right around the turn of the century. And things couldn't be any better than they are today. Yes sir, buildings are towering now as high as twenty stories. And moving pictures flicker up on a big screen. We have almost 8,000 automobiles in this country and we can travel by train from New York to California in less than seven days! And I even hear tell of two brothers from North Carolina who are working on some kind of flying contraption. **(He chuckles to himself.)** It'll never work. Closer to home, we've now got gas lamps, telephone and the latest design in cast iron stoves. And that reservoir keeps 5 gallons of water hot all day on just 3 buckets of coal. Oh boy, it sure beats chopping wood. And isn't our new icebox a beauty? Look at that! Holds 50 pounds of ice.

The icebox opens up to show the ice, bread and milk.

FATHER: Milk doesn't sour as quick as it used to and our dog Rover here keeps the water in the drip pan from overflowing. It wasn't to long ago that we had to carry water from a well. Thanks to progress, we have a pump right here in the kitchen.

The pump handle magically moves and water starts to flow.

FATHER: Of course, we keep a bucket of water handy to prime it with. Yes sir, we've got everything to make life easier.

Father looks over to his right, (our left,) where the first of the rotating dioramas mentioned above appears. A woman dressed in an apron, is ironing a shirt, while her young daughter works beside her. In the background is a large pantry with bags of food.

FATHER: Say mother?

MOTHER: Hmm?

FATHER: I was reading about a fellow named Tom Edison who's working on an idea for a snap-on electric light.

SARAH (MOTHER): Electric lights? No more kerosine! No more gas!

FATHER: (He chuckles.) Sarah sure gets to the core of the apple.

SARAH: But we do have this new washday marvel. It takes only 5 hours to do the wash. Imagine! It used to take two days.

FATHER: That's right folks, now Mother has time for other things, like...

SARAH: Like canning and cleaning the oven?

FATHER: Yes dear.

SARAH: Well ovens just don't clean themselves you know dear.

FATHER: I know dear. **(He chuckles.)** And they probably never will!

SARAH: Now, if you'll excuse me, I've got to get the laundry off the line before it starts raining cats and dogs.

Rover starts barking at the comment. The diorama disappears.

FATHER: Ah don't worry Rover. She didn't mean real dogs. Besides, it's not going to rain today. My lumbago isn't acting up.

Lightning flashes outside the windows and we hear thunder. Rain starts poring shortly thereafter.

SARAH: (Off-stage.) I hate to say I told you so.

FATHER: Oh, look at it come down! All you have to do is put your wash on the line right? Oh well, the cistern was low anyway.

The diorama on our right lights up to display a young boy using a stereoscope beside an oil lamp.

SON: Wowee! Look at that!

FATHER: Now James, I though I told you to ask my permission before using my new stereoscope. That's not a toy you know!

JIMMY (SON): Ooh la la! So that's the Norwegian doing the hoochie-koochie, eh dad?

FATHER: (Momentarily forgetting himself.) Isn't she a knockout? She's the star of the new World's Fair in Saint Louis and... ahem... you put that away before your mother finds it.

JIMMY: Aw dad...

FATHER: You heard me!

The Diorama darkens.

FATHER: Well, we have one of those new talking machines... now that is something. It plays music right here in our home.

The left diorama opens again, displaying Grandma sitting in a rocker, listening to music on a phonograph machine. A parrot is sitting on a perch, beside her. The record plays the theme song, "There's A Great Big Beautiful Tomorrow."

PARROT: Aaah. She keeps that thing going all day long. Aaah! Progress!

The left diorama closes, at which point the opposite one reopens. Patricia (the narrator's daughter,) is sitting at a vanity fixing her hair. She's only wearing her under garments, (but in 1900, the under garments were more modest than today's outer garments, so the scene isn't offensive.) Flowery, feminine music comes on for the daughter.

PATRICIA: Oh papa.

FATHER: Yes Patricia?

PATRICIA: (Astounded.) Papa! All these people! I'm... I'm indecent!

FATHER: (He chuckles.) Don't worry Patricia. They're friends. **(He addresses us.)** That's my teenage daughter. She's getting ready to go to a Valentines dance across town, on one of those new horseless trolleys.

PATRICIA: I think it's very romantic, you're taking mother out for Valentines dinner tonight.

FATHER: Well, you know what kind of sport I am.

PATRICIA: I only hope that I have an evening as romantic as yours and mothers.

A sudden thought crosses father's mind and he turns sharply towards his daughter.

FATHER: Now you be home by nine o'clock daughter. You hear me?

The flowery music dies for obvious reasons.

PATRICIA: (Dejectedly.) Yes papa.

The diorama fades.

FATHER: Well, with all this talking, I've worked up quite a thirst. I think I'll take one of those new fangled trolleys down to the drug store soda fountain and meet the boys for a cold sarsaparilla. Oh... ha ha, I'm sorry, I forgot... we're drinking root beer now! Same kind of thing, different name. Well, that's progress for you. Speaking of progress...

FATHER AND CHORUS SING:

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

Shining at the end of every day.

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

And tomorrow is just a dream away.

Man has a dream and that's the start.

He follows his dream in mind and heart

And when it becomes a reality,

It's a dream come true for you and me.

So there's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

Shining at the end of every day.

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

Just a dream away.

By this time, we have rotated to the next stage. This time, we see a slightly more modern kitchen than before. The same basic layout, however. Now, Father is sitting on a chair in the middle of the kitchen, cooling himself with a Niagara Falls fan. Electricity has arrived in the home, with wires hanging from the appliances. Rover lays on the floor in front of father.

FATHER: Whew, boy! Hottest Forth of July we've had in years. We've come a long way though since the turn of the century over twenty some-odd years ago. You know that pilot fellah... Charles Lindberg? He's about to fly a single winged airplane all the way across the Atlantic. **(He chuckles.)** He's never gonna make it. And sports stadiums are springing up all over. And boy... nobody hits that old horse hide like that new fellah, Babe Ruth. Jazz music is the cat's meow, and there's been adds in the paper for months for a movie starring Al Jollson... **(he whispers this,)** and he's going to talk! And sing! Boy, I've got to see that.



From outside of the window, a car horn blows. Father seems to smile at the sound.

FATHER: Ha ha ha. There goes Schwarts in his hump mobile. He sure loves that horn. You know, in my new Essex, I've got an electric starter! Now I don't have to crank. We can travel from New York to Los Angeles by train in only three days. Now we've got a house full of new electrical servants. Mr. Edison sure added life to our home.

Suddenly, silly, hyper music comes on and all of the 'electrical servants' start going crazy. The vacuum moves crazily, the oven and refrigerator doors open and close quickly, and lights flicker on and off.

FATHER: (To machines.) Whoa there! You'll blow a fuse!

As if on cue, the lights go out, and all of the machines die. The stage is dark. Only the city lights outside the windows are bright.

FATHER: Drat! That's the third one this week. I buy fuses by the case.

Suddenly the lights outside the windows go dark as well.

FATHER: Uh oh. And I've blown the whole neighborhood again! **(He sounds as if he finds a strange amusement in his deed.)**

WOMAN OUTSIDE OF WINDOW: Henry! He did it again! Go over and give that neighbor of ours what for!

Rover growls, preparing to come to the aid of his master.

FATHER: Easy Rover. **(Directed to off stage.)** Jimmy! Hurry up with that fuse!

We hear the crunching of gravel as Jimmy walks around in the back yard trying to find the fuse box.

JIMMY: (Heard off stage.) Shucks. Every time he has company, he blows a fuse. And guess who always has to change it.

FATHER: I heard that young man! I heard that!

We hear a clunk, and suddenly the lights are back on. We see now that the right diorama has opened up to reveal Mother sitting on the front porch, sewing a costume of some sort.

MOTHER: Oh, well that's more like it. John, yours is the last costume I've got to finish before the parade starts.

We learn from this statement that Father's name is John. I'll keep calling him Father though.

FATHER: Sarah's lady's club is responsible for our town's Forth of July celebration tonight. She's got us all roped up into preforming in their program.

SARAH: And I've decided that we're going as George and Martha Washington dear.

FATHER: Oh... the father of our country. (**Whimsical.**) That's a role that really fits me! You know, I--

SARAH: (Interrupting Father.) I'm so glad that we installed an electric light fixture here on the porch, because it's just to darn hot to be sewing inside.

FATHER: Yes Sarah. You know, next year I'd like to go as Benedict Arnold! Ha ha. I--

SARAH: Wait until you see what I've got planned for the fireworks show tonight.

Rover barks, we assume at the mention of fireworks, which we all know, dogs hate.

FATHER: Rover! Don't interrupt, while Sarah's interrupting.

SARAH: And guess who volunteered to choose the music for the program.

Sarah's diorama goes dark, and the opposite one lights up. Jimmy is standing next to an old fashioned radio, while Grandpa sits in a chair, fiddling with a firework.

JIMMY: I did pop! Listen to this!

Jimmy flips on the radio and a patriotic tune comes on.

FATHER: Oh... that's a nice tune Jimmy. (**To us.**) You know, with our new Gladstone radio set, we can get news and **** * (Father's dialog got garbled here, due to the loud music.)

Jimmy switches stations and a news broadcast comes on.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: People are starting to arrive downtown for a spectacular Forth of July parade and fireworks event tonight. Mayor Beaverfield said---

Radio dies down and Father directs his attention to the right diorama, even though it's not lit up yet.

FATHER: Oh Patricia.

PATRICIA: Yes Father?

FATHER: Better get a move on. The radio says people are arriving downtown.

PATRICIA: (Whining.) Do I really have to go?

The Diorama lights up to reveal Patricia dressed up as the Statue of Liberty, loading a torch.

PATRICIA: If my new boyfriend Theodore sees me in this, it'll scare him away!

FATHER: (He chuckles.) Well dear, if that happens, you'll always have that torch you can carry for him. Ha ha ha.

Rover growls at his master's joke about his daughter.

PATRICIA: (Exasperated.) Oh father!

The diorama darkens.

FATHER: Oh calm down Rover, I was only kidding. (**To us.**) By the way, we have indoor plumbing now! Oh boy, that's really great on cold nights. Especially for out perennial house guest, old Uncle Orville.

The left hand diorama lights up to display a bathroom, complete with Orville lying in the tub.

He's reading the paper, and wiggling his toes over the edge of the tub. Next to him is a block of ice, and a fan, which blows the cold ice air onto Orville. Hanging from the wall is an "Uncle Sam" costume. Obviously Sarah even roped Orville into participating in the Forth of July show.

FATHER: Uncle Orville's taken over the coolest spot in the house. And he's rigged up a real clever contraction. He calls it "air cooling." Humph. To bad he's not reading the help wanted adds.

The diorama darkens.

UNCLE ORVILLE: (From off stage.) No privacy at all around this place!

FATHER: Sorry Orville. (**To us.**) You know, considering all the--

SARAH: (Off stage.) John. Costume's ready.

FATHER: Oh! Coming Martha! (**Back to us.**) Well, as I was saying, considering all the conveniences we now have, I'd say that we're really on easy street these days. It just can't get any better! Just goes to show that--

Father and Chorus:

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
Shining at the end of every day.
There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
And tomorrow is just a dream away.
Man has a dream and that's the start.
He follows his dream in mind and heart
And when it becomes a reality,
It's a dream come true for you and me.
So there's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
Shining at the end of every day.
There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
Just a dream away.

Walt Disney's Carousel of Progress Scenes 3 & 4

-Courtesy of Jason Snyder-

The theater has rotated once again, to another stage. Again, it's the same basic layout. Father is sitting a booth set up against the kitchen wall. Rover is on the floor in front of him. The overall decor is now very fortyish. There are fewer exposed electric wires, due to the fact that they are well hidden. We see a jack-o-lantern on the table in front of Father, so we can guess that it is Halloween.

FATHER: Well, it's another Halloween here in the fabulous Forties. Everything is better than ever now. And we've got some amazing new wonders around the house to prove it. For instance, our refrigerator holds more food than ice cubes. And thanks to our new automatic dishwasher, I don't have to dry the dishes anymore after supper. Give's Rover and I more time to enjoy our evening stroll together.



Rover barks at the mention of a possible stroll.

FATHER: (He chuckles.) Later boy. (Back to us.) Oh, and here's something else that's new. I just heard a new term today on the radio. Fellow says, we've got something now called the 'rat race.' Did you ever hear that one? It sure describes my life. I'm involved with something now called commuting. I drive into the city for work all day, and then turn right around and drive all the way back. And the highway is crowded with other rats doing the same thing!

SARAH: (Off stage, condescending.) That's what they call progress dear.

FATHER: Ha ha ha ha. I guess she's right. But we do have television. (He adds quickly and irritably,) When it works. Give's you something to do after you get home. I kind of like it, you know? A guy named John Cameron Swayze gives us all the news and then they have all this singing and dancing. A lot of fluff, but it's fun.

Right diorama opens to display grandma and grandpa near the TV. On the TV is an orchestra playing a quiet tune. Gramps has fallen asleep.

FATHER: You know, I predict that day that millions of people will learn Latin and Greek sitting in front of their TV sets.

GRANDMA: (To grandpa.) Are you awake dear?

Grandpa continues to snore which is a quick answer to Grandma's question. She quickly turns the channel to a show which she would rather be watching. A boxing match.

GRANDMA: Give him a left you big lug!

Diorama closes.

FATHER: Ah yes, a new age of electronic civilization is upon us!

Opposite diorama opens to reveal Jimmy carving a jack-o-lantern.

JIMMY: Hey dad, what do you think of my jack-o-lantern?

FATHER: (In mock fear.) Oh! Boy is that scary!

JIMMY: That's 'cause I used my beautiful sister Patty's picture for a model! Ha ha ha.

Rover barks at Jimmy's remark about Patty.

FATHER: Down Rover. Jim, Rover appreciates your joke.

SARAH: (Off stage.) Now... you're always kidding poor Patty. She's certainly prettier than either of you.

Rover and Jimmy both howl.

The right diorama opens again to reveal Patty, using an old fashioned, vibrating exercise machine. She's talking on the phone.

FATHER: You hear that? My daughter Patty is using that old exercise machine she rescued from the attic. It was all the rage in the Twenties. Grandma of course had to have one. Didn't work then, doesn't work now. **(He chuckles.)** Consistent at least. Makes a lot of noise and blows fuses.

PATRICIA: (Her voice is shaky, due to the vibrating exercise machine.) As I was saying Babs, I think college is really swell! You should give it a try!

BABS: (Over the phone.) Oh Patty, are you going to the Halloween party tonight?

PATRICIA: Oh yes. And I'm hoping to loose a couple more inches by then. I'm going with that dreamboat, Wilfred.

BABS: (Shocked.) Wilfred?! What a slug!

PATRICIA: He's coming as the headless horseman.

BABS: It fits.

PATRICIA: Come on Babs! That clodhopper Howard you're going with is no Crackerjack prize!

Patty's voice dies out as the diorama closes.

FATHER: Oh poor Howard. I wonder what they said about me when I was dating Sarah.

CUCKOO CLOCK: Cuckoo. Cuckoo.

Rover barks, amused at the wooden bird's great sense of timing.

FATHER: (Chuckling.) You're lucky Rover. You don't have to date. Well, we're caught up in the do it yourself craze these days. We're remodeling our basement as something called a rumpus room. And we're looking forward to a few rumpuses I'll tell you, as long as they don't get out of hand.

The left diorama opens to reveal Sarah on a ladder, applying wall paper to a wall. The wallpaper is a little crooked. I looks like something out of an I Love Lucy episode. A small food mixer is humming on a table next to her.

SARAH: John, this papering is getting out of hand. I could use a little help.

FATHER: Now Sarah, didn't I set up that clever automatic paint stirring machine for you?

SARAH: Yes John, you're a genius. Of course this will ruin my food mixer, not that you'd care.

The diorama closes. We hear the hum of the food mixer getting louder and higher pitched.

FATHER: Oh good old Sarah. Always the last laugh.

The food mixer is at it's loudest, at which point we hear paint splattering. Sarah shrieks.

FATHER: (Sounding worried.) What happened Sarah?!

SARAH: Oh you and your progress! That paint mixer of yours just sloshed paint across my rump... er- rumpus room.

FATHER: (Laughing.) How do you like that? I always say, if you're going to be married, marry a girl with a sense of humor. **(More seriously.)** Well, it's time to move on. Let's cheer up Sarah by singing our song. Come-on. Everybody!

FATHER AND CHORUS SING:

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

Shining at the end of every day.

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

And tomorrow is just a dream away.

Man has a dream and that's the start.

He follows his dream in mind and heart

And when it becomes a reality,
It's a dream come true for you and me.
So there's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
Shining at the end of every day.
There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,
Just a dream away.

The Carousel has moved to yet the next scene. It is Christmas now, in a modern living room. The tree is up. The house is totally decorated for the season. This time there are no dioramas. The entire family is present in the room. Father is standing in the kitchen, cooking. Sarah is sitting at the right, using a computer. Grandma and Jimmy are sitting near the TV. Jimmy wears virtual reality headgear, and makes occasional twitches as though he's manipulating something in the VR. Grandma has the headgear up above her eyes, but is not playing yet. Grandpa and Patricia are sitting over to the left, near the Christmas tree.

FATHER: Isn't it a pleasant holiday? Turkey's in the oven, it's peaceful and quiet.

JIMMY: Yes! Three hundred points, my best score yet!

SARAH: Well, it was peaceful until Santa brought that new virtual reality space pilot game.

Jimmy's headgear goes up above his eyes.

JIMMY: Your turn Grandma. Let's switch the image over to the TV, so the resident flying ace can show you how it works.

Grandma's headgear goes down, and the TV turns on. On the TV we see the interior of a space craft cockpit.

JIMMY: Now, it's a little tricky. Just use your game glove to fly behind the other guy and then blast him with your laser blaster!

GRANDMA: Laser blaster? Well, I'll give it a try.

JIMMY: Take a look around Grandma. You're in the ship.

GRANDMA: I feel like I'm really there!

JIMMY: Okay, get ready, you're about to blast off!

GRANDMA: Here goes nothing.

The screen flickers into motion as the space outside of the cockpit begins to move. We soon see enemy ships passing by.

JIMMY: Alright, here he comes! Ooh, you missed him.

As Grandma and Jimmy play Space Pilot, Sarah looks up from her computer.

SARAH: Hey everyone, I'm done programming out new voice activation system.

FATHER: Now all our household items will do anything we tell them to do.

GRANDPA: Great... tell the refrigerator to bring me a root beer.

SARAH: (Chuckling.) Well, it can't quite do that. But I'll show you something that it can do.
(She declares:) Tree lights, thirty percent brighter.

The Christmas Tree lights brighten a little.

GRANDPA: Ah, that's no big deal. Anybody can do that voice activating stuff. Watch this.
Rover... speak!

ROVER: Woof!

SARAH: John, the oven should respond to your voice commands now. Give it a try.

FATHER: Okay, here goes. Temperature to 375.



OVEN: (It actually talks.) Temperature increased to 375.

PATRICIA: Look at that! It even talks back.

FATHER: Like some people I know.

PATRICIA: Yeah right dad!

JIMMY: (Watching Grandma's progress on the TV.) You're going to loose him Grandma! Bank to the right!

PATRICIA: Remember dad's turkey last year?

GRANDPA: Yeah, that thing really smoked up the place when it burned, didn't it?

PATRICIA: We ended up microwaving frozen pizzas.

SARAH: Well, no need to worry about the turkey this year. Not with an oven that will do anything your father tells it to do.

JIMMY: Ooo! Good shot!

GRANDMA: Did you see that?!

JIMMY: Dad, Grandma's up to 550 points!

FATHER: Did you say 550? Man, she's getting the hang of that thing.

OVEN: (Quietly, without anyone noticing.) Temperature increased to 550.

GRANDPA: I can't believe all the new gadgets they've got now. Did you know in my day--

PATRICIA: Oh no. You're not going to tell us about the old days when you didn't even have a car phone.

GRANDPA: (He chuckles.) Hey Trisch, for a while we didn't even have a house phone. Not to mention laser discs and high def TV. Everything is automated these days, including...

From off stage we hear a toilet flushing.

GRANDPA: (Continuing.) Well, including that.

COUSIN ORVILLE: (Off stage.) No privacy at all around this place!

GRANDPA: Sorry Orville. Anyway, you guys don't realize how good you've got it nowadays.

SARAH: You know, my Grandfather told me the very same thing when I was a kid.

GRANDMA: (Still playing the VR.) Take that you nincompoop!

JIMMY: Hey check it out dad. Grandma's up to 975 points.

FATHER: Wow! 975.

OVEN: Temperature increased to 975. **(Oven starts beeping and smoke erupts.)** Overload-- overload...

SARAH: John, what's wrong with the oven?

FATHER: Well-- UH...

The oven door slams open and we hear the crackling of burnt turkey skin.

OVEN: Bake Mode complete. Enjoy your meal.

PATRICIA: Anyone for pizza?

SARAH: Another Christmas turkey ruined.

Grandma's game ends. Her headgear lifts back over her eyes.

GRANDMA: Man what a game! I really smoked those guys. Looks like I'm resident flying ace now.

JIMMY: Best two out of three Grandma?

GRANDMA: Later kid. Boy that was fun. What will they think up next?

PATRICIA: Who knows? We've got a whole new century waiting for us out there.

SARAH: Yeah, and maybe sometime in the new century, your father will learn how to talk to out oven.

FATHER: Well, by then maybe ovens will read out minds. But hey, as long as we're all here and happy and together for the holidays, who cares if I burned out Christmas turkey?

GRANDMA: I do! I'm starving.

A round of laughter erupts from the whole family.

JIMMY: Don't worry dad. Someday, everything is going to be so automated, you won't ever have to cook another Christmas turkey again.

FATHER AND CHORUS SING:

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

Shining at the end of every day.

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

And tomorrow is just a dream away.

SARAH:

Man has a dream and that's the start.

FATHER:

He follows his dream in mind and heart

PATRICIA:

And when it becomes a reality,

GRANDPA:

It's a dream come true for you and me.

CHORUS:

So there's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

Shining at the end of every day.

FATHER:

There's a great big beautiful tomorrow,

CHORUS:

Just a dream away.